

Final Fantasy



START ★ JAPANESE FILM

ballblazer: the simplest, fastest and most competitive sport in the known universe. It grew from dark roots in ancient space war to become king of all games among every lifeform within range of Interstellar ethercasting. In exactly three minutes, Ballblazer can make you a hero—or destroy a lifetime of dreams.

The year is 3097, and the place is a null-gravity nexus mid-space in the binary star system Kalamon and Kalamar. Moments from now, on the luminous sur-

face of an artificial asteroid, the final round of the Interstellar Ballblazer Championship—the greatest tournament of all time and space—will begin, and history will be made. For the first time a creature from the planet Earth has battled through the countless qualifying rounds and eliminations, enduring and then triumphing, across vast parsecs, to win the right to compete for the honor of his planet and the ultimate title any being can possess: Masterblazer.

QUICK START



You're playing the top screen. You have the ball you're coming up on the Goalbeams getting in position to score.



Bullblazer: The Game

You're strapped in a Kirodoid. So is your opponent. The screen is split so you each have your own view of the game. You see your opponent's Kirodoid. Your opponent sees yours.

You face each other. One of you presses **START** and the ball is fired. Go for it and get it before your opponent does. Now find the moving Goalbeams and blast the ball through for a score. It's total speed, power and points—one on one until time runs out.

The one with the most points wins. It's easy to play—difficult to master. But go to Step One and find out for yourself.

- 1 **Insert the cartridge** for Bullblazer in your Atari 5200 SuperSystem as explained in your Owner's Guide, and turn on the system.
- 2 **Plug controllers** into jacks 1 and 2. Use controller 1 to play the top screen.

- 3 **Demo Game:** Press the **Start** to watch demo games and games between Demos. Notice the split screen. Each half shows the view from one of the Kirodoids. Press any key to stop the demonstration. And remember: the International Bullblazer Conference strictly forbids betting on Demo matches.

- 4 **Select Game Options:** First press the **0** key. One of these options will flash: Top Player (Purple, left) Game Time (Minute) Bottom Player (Orange, right).

- 5 **Change the OPTION:** Press the **0** key to choose Demo 1 through Demo 9, or to change the game time from one minute to nine minutes.

- 6 **Press START:** The ball is fired into the middle of the field.

- 7 **Push joystick forward:** Look at your half of the screen and keep moving forward until you reach the ball. Your ship will rotate if the ball goes out of sight to the left or right. Just keep moving forward and you'll get to it. (Jack 1 controls the top of your screen; Jack 2 controls the bottom.)

You're playing the best-
tact soccer. You see your
opponent quickly ap-
proaching the Goal
Square with the ball.



- 8 **Take the ball.** Move forward—keep the ball in your view screen. Push up on **Y**. Your Puffball automatically captures the ball and centers it on your view screen. Then press **Scorball** automatically snaps around to face your goal. You'll hear a sound, and the ball will change to your color when you capture it.
- 9 **Blow the ball.** Push any of your fire buttons.
- 10 **Steal the ball.** Too often your opponent will circle from the side. When you have a lead foot, blow the ball away. Go after it—capture it.
- 11 **Score!** Find the GoalSquare. Blow there up on your screen. Center fire. And blast the ball through the GoalSquare.
- 12 **Stop the game.** Press the **PULSE** button. Press it again to restart.
- 13 **Reset the Game.** Press **PULSE**, then **RESET**.

Rotofails

- Ten games high, with foot-
pad 13 inches in diameter
- Mass = 3000 kilograms
- Two-axis movement; acce-
lerating velocity = 50 meters
/second
- Rotational: Go-forward com-
puter automatically rotates
horizontal 30 degrees to face
ball. Rotates sideways 10
to face goal when you cap-
ture the ball.



Rotofail is a two-player
game. The Rotofail
board is a circular
area with a goal
square in the center.



The Playfield

Grid

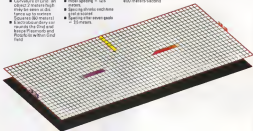
- One Square on Battlefield Grid = 5 x 5 meters
- Battlefield Grid = 55 Squares (275 meters x 275 Squares (750 meters))
- Curvature of Grid: an object 2 meters high may be seen within Squares 180 meters
- A second boundary surrounds the Grid and keeps Plasmorb and Rockets within Grid field

Goalbeams

- Pure energy in visible range
- One solid each end of Grid
- Motion approx. 5 meters/second
- Initial Speed = 125 meters
- Spacing between redness gradually increased
- Spacing after seven goals = 10 meters

Plasmorb

- Diameter = 1/4 meter
- Mass = 1000 kilograms
- Flies 3 meters along Grid
- No metallic color yellow
- Initial velocity = 450-480 meters/second





Welcome ladies, gentlemen and variants, to the final round of Bullblazer, 3077 Fox Run Sterling, the Voice of the Void, and celebrating with me today is Ambassador Kipling, one of the great Masterblazers of recent times, now Governor of the Omega Colonies. Ambassador, welcome. We haven't talked since you purchased the Omega Colander with your Neomarsian purse. How is it creating a planetary system?

Star is definitely being worked. On the other hand, there are times I'd like to be back in a floofball, working the Grids like any other Blazer.

Ambassador, this is the first time an Earthling has made the final round of the Interstellar. What are his chances?

Frankly, I think he's in trouble. These Neomars are a young species—they were barely out of their atmosphere when the planet was created.



Which was which?

Centuries ago Man, at the end of the Great Machine—back when there was still war for deep space dog fights, you had to maneuver your re-buck under the scorching lasers of those combat—reversing thrust, instantly maneuvering plasma torpedos

blame on your energy shields, that sort of thing. The glimmers during space combat would snap your neck like a toothpick.

And so a whole new breed arose, right? The thick necks, the shortened synaptic connections, the triple-walled lungs.

Exactly. Part of it was just old-fashioned genetic engineering, of course. But Bullblazing developed from an old military training exercise. They used reflexes like our Karateka, and Karateka to simulate sudden changes in direction and acceleration. Doubly stuff. They based up ten recruits for every one that finally saw action in space. Praise God, the Great Machine is behind us, and what we have left is the best sport of all, zero

Crockett On Forefields:

[illegible]

"When the Phantom gets close—about seven and a half meters—your Phantom is activated. It's as if the phone rings in and on play on the ball. It means this is a corner but where—? Contact the ball on the goal only, on your side, but your teammate face it. That's you, ready to change down a bit and make a goal."

[illegible]

Table 1



Patients should be told to avoid alcohol during the administration of



**Psychological research has found
evidence of emotional contagion
and sympathy.**



It is true that a Molluscuscure such as penicillin has the most highly evolved nervous system of any creature in the galaxy.

Oh, got that. I don't know about that. The Skyline version hunters on Tropics—the guys who actually grab the things—those are pretty fast birds.

Abstract

(Deep-sigh) Well, Sir, Ballblasting isn't just a sport. It's deep-discipline for the nervous system. When the on-board-computer reboots you ninety degrees, just keeping a clear head can be the toughest part of all. But it's worth it. Once you have the pair of Ballblasting, drifting with the rest of the galaxy seems like vacation.

Excuse me, Affinity. Here are the two Bonobos men, working onto the field. Crocker, from Earth, is in the purple, and Nuts, representing the Minuteman system, is in orange. In the background, we're hearing the traditional "Song of the Gold." That's auto-generated, of course.



Based on the countless-on-screen **Masterblasters**, it is really an honor to hear my own melody in there among about a dozen other Masters.

The musical essence of **Masterblasters** of old is heard, as each **Rotofall** takes its place, ready for the first face-off. And the two best **Ballblasters** in the galaxy are staring down the Grid, meditating on the "song," waiting. **Karta** attracted some attention, coming up through the perforations, didn't he?

Sure he did. That scaly **Minotaur** can shut out a Level 9 **David** in less than a minute. But beating a **David** doesn't mean you can beat a human. Whenever you go to the extreme, there's only one regulation: **Ballblaster** game—three minutes, two players, one victor.

Missing words, **Arboreen**—and here we go! The **Plasmaorb** begins to form our left, and both **Karta** and **Crockett** are already accelerating downfield. Each had felt each forward even before the orb appeared.

All these boys are hearing now is that football rhythm, driving, driving.

All right! **Crockett's Rotofall** has captured the orb in its **Fullfield** and now he's vetting, right, heading for the goal, trying to get around **Karta**.

The goal is moving, of course, in the same direction as the ball is fired.

There you go. **Crockett's** sighted the goal but he's reversing direction, backing up, taking out **Karta**. He's back to where the **Goalblasters** used have already disappeared over the horizon—but he blows anyway. That's in three points for the **Earthling** with an early over-the-horizon shot.

And you do want to get those **OTB** shots in early. Man, before the goal starts to shrink.

Arboreen, you're often conflicted with perfecting the **OTB** shot.

Somebody had to.

OK. Here we go, second face-off, the ball blows in from the right this time, with **Karta** out in front. The **Minotaur** has it—and his **Rotofall** rotates to face the goal.



Signs of a good player have it not losing his orientation during Backstage. Move forward, forward

But Crockett is catching up alongside him now—part of the Monitor's Rotational power goes into that activated Pushfield. But Crockett's not using his Pushfield yet.

Good play. You want to get in close, really hear that electromagnetic buzz in your helmet before you blast "Miss the ball," is what we teach the rookies on my planet.

All right. Crockett blasts the ball away from the Monitor, but Norta recovers. Crockett is blocking him—there it is! Straight past the Earthling, into the goal, two points for Norta.

Classic goal defense there by the Earthling—stay between your goal and the opponent. But it's no match for a good-angle shot.

Arboreal, we've seen some quick scoring there today.

That's right. These boys have been competing since age twelve. This is the Monitor's chance to make a big splash in the galaxy, so it let it riding on young Crockett.

And here goes the third-day-off. Ball in from the right this time, the Rotational race down, and Crockett is there a microsecond before Norta—but he doesn't manage clearly capture the ball. He's...

What we're seeing here is some fine Pushfield dribbling. Crockett knows that if he captures the ball he'll lose power, so he's keeping his Pushfield activated. Each time he gets near the ball, the Pushfield becomes a forward Push-coast there, by the Earthling, but he has to capture the ball to score.

There—he captures, swings the ball to the left of his view field and blasts—

—and misses. The ball bounces off the electroboundary to the left of the Goalhouse. Norta overreacts, captures.

Crockett is already moving back. He's going to try a block midfield, but Norta is out there.



The Earthling has the right idea—the key to active defense is to keep moving, keep moving.

Incredible! Kari makes an angle shot, the orb bounces off the electromagnetic and back into the field. He maneuvers around the Earthling, captures the ball directly in front of the goal—

—blast! blast!

—and that's it! The Earthling flashes with the winning electromagnetic pulse, and that's another point for the Minotaur Command, Arborea!

That score looks close, but I think it's obvious that we're scoring on outclassed players here. I'd wager to say that a few hundred million humans are taking on Earth now.

As indeed there are. For the next two minutes, billions of Earthlings, scattered throughout their tiny solar system, hang on every word of the distant ethercast, hopes rising, then dimming, as face-off after face-off. Kari from the Minotaur system holds the terrain to a handful of points.

Crockett On Offense

Offense is ball control—keeping the wing of the Pioneer's. At the time, I'll have your mind blown if I move out and capture the Pioneer's—I'll change to your side, and you'll happen to have the goal that I beat the intent and capture the ball. You for the Pioneer, given word, then head for the goalposts—they'll be heading the same direction the ball was started in.

Watch your action when the Pioneer's is connected to the Goal beams, blast. If you can't close, you get the point farther back, too. And you can't actually see the Goalbeams—you get them. The Goalbeams turn after each score so go for two, and three points first. If you get on points, it's a shot out. Otherwise, the winner has the highest score.

At the end of the game, you'll find you go right over me, and the next score I take it.

Once you get the ball, I'll try some angle shots. Lay the Pioneer's wing to one side of your wing, then blast—I'll go in that direction. To get around the blocker, use an angle shot off the wall. Because the ball off the electromagnetic is given your opponent a blocker, then rush forward and capture again.

When you get good, try Point and blocking. Keep your head down as you approach the Pioneer. Instead of catching the ball, you'll catch the Pioneer's wing, which uses 25% of your energy—just nudge the Pioneer's wing in front of you. Then capture it when you want to block the goal.

Crockett on Defense

"Over the best Blazer doesn't have the best all strategies. When you're in you're on defense and then you're only got two choices: Goal blocking and blocking.

If you're chasing your opponent downwind, don't get directly behind him—aim in from the side to knock that line ball away. Then you ought to grab that line ball for yourself.

You know you're within blocking range when you hear the buz. That's when you ask the goalie the question, the better the blast.

The toughest part of goal blocking is knowing when you've been snipped in from the ball. Keep retreating back

and forth and listen for the sound of the Ratsnap—that's how you know you've changed direction. Then when you overtake your opponent you've got to remember which side you're on. It's easier to just do it than try to talk about it.

Blocking is a rougher form of defense—at least for boys. It means snipping scored goals even when the goal and your opponent keep moving around in your own screen. I say any kid knows instinctively when that's the case, but my opponent sniped. And he's to keep myself right between his goalposts. You can do it, too.

Now, with fewer than fifteen seconds remaining, the Terran Crockett is behind mine to start and the face-off begins.

And here we go with the last face-off, the clock is running, the orb blown in from the right. Look at that Earthing move!

He's exposed the ball and nudged the goal—then pulls back—catching Karkaby surprise.

And there are the first notes of the final countdown...

It's an impossible long shot.

[LONG SILENCE]

Incredible! He made it! The ballcase is flashing, the clock stops with just 2.5 seconds to wait—three points for the Terran pushes his score back to four points against Karkaby's six.



Now, we're seeing history here. One more point and the score goes to five all. Then the game could go into sudden death overtime.

Face-off, the Robotoids in front of their goals, the cell blasts in—600 meters per second—the Terran rushes and...

One second. Xarta has captured the cell. He's backing up, killing time—

And that's it! The clock hits zero, the Terran's Robotoid spins out in the traditional loser's position, the atmosphere over the arenaoid glows with the orange color of the victor from Minotaur systems.

One remarkable contest, Star, I think...

Wait one microsecond. Xarta has remained on the Grid, to accompany the Terran Robotoid off the field. It's a gesture I don't think we've seen in this tournament for centuries! Arboreus!

It's a brand new Masterblaster tribute to an up-and-coming species, Star, I'd say that we're going to be hearing more about Kartlings. A few millennia from now, these Terrans are likely to be real contenders.

Thank you, Arboreus Kipling. This is Star Sterling, Voice of the Void, reminding you to your local ethercast. We'll see you here, next solar cycle, same place, same game. In fact, the only game that loses. Three minutes, two players, one victor!

Interview With Xarta

S: An incredible match, Xarta.

X: Great. Mind, I'm a wreck. Where is the Void? did that Tormis come from?

S: Little G-class star, nothing fancy, just off the Main Sequence.

X: What a Blazer. His neurons must live at warp speed.

S: But not quite fast enough. Xarta, by Tormis' merit law, you're now retired! Come to pass on a few tips to Blazers on the way up?

X: As long as it doesn't get back to the Earthlings.

S: Of course.

X: OK. Here's an old Maxima trick for over the horizon shots. When you can still just make out the Goal beams. The reason of the blast knocks you back, over the horizon—and the score is based on your position when the Plasmoth actually passes through the goal. Best trick in the galaxy for turning two points into three.

S: How about the way you escaped the Earthling in the second minute?



X: Simple. I'm moving downwind with the ball, and I know their sight behind me. I can almost see his viewing screen, with one light in the middle of it. So I blast. The ball goes forward and I recoil back right into him, blowing him back so I can get to the ball first!

S: Anything for close-in goal play?

X: Here's one I learned from Arborex. If you have the Plasmoth, but you're up against the boundary and need to move back a bit, hold your stick forward and blast—you'll bounce back to three-point range, and you can catch the ball on the rebound.

S: How about for open, just starting out?

X: Go out on the Grid, and practice aiming just outside the Goalbeams. The Plasmoth bounces back, instead of going through the whole goal sequence. You get more practice in a short time.

S: Anything else?

X: Yeah. Stay away from Earthlings. Something tells me those guys are really gonzo for trouble.

Influence was created by the Interactive Computer Graphics Group. David Levine created the concept, directed the project, and designed and implemented the screen graphics, physical dynamics, control structures, and real-time program. Peter Lundqvist, the Games Group Leader, designed and implemented the sound effects and provided Droid Intelligence, composed and programmed the music, and helped devise the game-play mechanisms and strategy. David Rindler and Gary Hines of Research and Design contributed game design elements and game rules. Charlie Koller helped conceptualize game dynamics. Most aid and support were provided by other members of the Games Group. David Fox provided aesthetic support and Gary Weychik contributed to the Retardall display. Special thanks to George Lucas.



The screen is split so you each have your own view of the game (1). You've got the top screen, so you see your opponent's orange Flotboll (2). Your opponent sees your purple Flotboll (3). There's only a half second left (4). The score is four to three with your opponent in the lead (5). Your opponent has the ball and is quickly approaching the Goalkeepers (6). But you're blocking the line of fire.